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574 Towards the end of the day comes the formal distribution
43 of food. The master of the feast, conferring anxiously with his friends, has been setting out the taro in heaps, making them correspond by laborious arithmetic with the number of his principal guests. Now that the tally appears satisfactory, he turns, with an enthusiasm bordering on violence, to the distribution. With loud shouts he and his assistants rush back and forth depositing, or often rather hurling down, bunches of taro before the guests, who accept them with a fitting appearance of indifference. In the same way the pig flesh—legs, quarters, chines, and entrails—are bestowed on top of the taro heaps, and the guests are ready to depart. They have been sufficiently regaled throughout the day; the food thus finally distributed is to be carried home.
574 The women pack it into their string bags and prepare to
43 move off. Men and children will bear their part. One
482 remembers the spectacle of a diminutive child bearing away the blood-spattered head of a huge pig, balanced with difficulty and pride upon his own small crown. Thus laden with proofs of friendship the guests depart to await the time when, in a year or so, they will make a similar return of hospitality.

● 535 With certain of these festivals there will go the dance and
536 pantomine. The Orokaiva ballet will be described in greater detail in another chapter, but in passing one may claim that its brilliant natural setting, the sudden theatrical entry of the performers into the sunlit village, their paint and feathers and voluminous costumes of dyed palm-leaf, the inspiriting beat of the drum, and above all the swift movements of the dance, full of grace and power, all combine to make a spectacle that one might even call magnificent. The mime comes as a dramatic interlude in the dance, and presents as a theme some legend or incident of village life, enacted with great spirit and humour, and sometimes with considerable taste, upon the most realistic of stages—the village itself, and in the midst of the audience who are on such intimate terms with the actors as occasionally to add an extempore touch of their own to the play.

Such social amusements as these still continue, one is happy to say, to add some zest and interest to native life.

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292 589 [531] covers the curious shame which she feels on this occasion. It is made of bark-cloth or of string netting, and is embroidered, sometimes completely covered, with the seeds known as Job's Tears. Being made and decorated with great care, however, it is later worn rather as an ornament under which the widow's charms suffer no concealment.

292 589 531 *The Widow's Vest, Baja.* This is usually a straight sleeveless shirt of knitted string completely covered with Job's Tears (*Coix lachrimae*). It reaches usually to the waist but sometimes as low as to the knees. *Coix lachrimae* seeds are of two kinds, the one a delicate grey, the other fawn, and with the introduction of black and sometimes red seeds the garment may be very effectively decorated.

291 [535] [631] *The Bark-cloth Mantle.* This is merely a broad sheet, three feet square or more, which is wrapped round the shoulders in cold weather. It is also used very prettily by girls in the dance. Holding it by two corners, the dancer swings it to and fro as she moves or allows it to float out behind her head. The bark-cloth is gaily painted and the girl's movements are light and graceful, so that in this guise she is not ineptly called *boriri*, 'the butterfly'.

292 [177] [531] *Bi-kaio, the Apron.* This is a small square of knitted string which hangs from the belt in front of the body. It is worn only by old men of distinction, and is seldom seen even on them. It may be only a partly assimilated introduction from the hill neighbours (Biagi, &c.), among whom it is certainly found more commonly. In the only example which I saw the string was knitted in patterns of red, brown, black, and white, and the fabric was decorated with black seeds and tufts of cuscus fur. W. N. Beaver mentions the *bi-kaio* in his list of *otohu*.[1]

### *Hair-dressing*

302 The Orokaiva commonly allows his hair to grow long, and with the frequent application of coco-nut oil the close ringlets become clogged in a series of tags. The typical *coiffure* is therefore a mass of tails about the thickness of a

[1] 'Notes on Homicidal Emblems among the Orokaiva', &c., *Annual Report*, 1918–19, p. 97; under *Vo Haja*.

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initiate's head. This decoration consists not only of feather-sets but of shell and ivory ornaments, particularly strings of dogs' teeth wound round and round the bunch of hair. One boy, when I saw him submitting patiently to the ministrations of his attendant, already had nine strings of dogs' teeth round his hair at the back, each consisting of perhaps 150 teeth, and he was then waiting for more. It will be easily imagined that the weight of this portentous mass of feathers and ornaments is very considerable, and as the process of decorating lasted some hours the eyes of their wearers were already blinking with fatigue at this early stage of the day. Oppressed either with the weight or the magnificence of their headdresses, they held their heads as still as possible or moved them stiffly, like a man unaccustomed to an evening shirt.

I have been assured that it is the function of the *nobo*, or maternal uncle, to present the *kokumbari*, for which he receives payment from the initiate's father in the form of a pig, and from his mother in the form of a pot (*obu*), a wooden bowl (*tewa*), a water calabash, a *bo*, a netted bag (*eti*), a fish-net (*eutu*), and a spear. But, as so often in the case of such rules, we find on looking into the matter that other relatives may equally well perform the function. Thus in the present instance I recorded more cases where the *kokumbari* was given by the paternal uncle than where it was given by the maternal uncle. In other cases, again, it was given by the elder brother. On the whole, however, it may be regarded as proper for the *nobo* to give the *kokumbari*, as I have also heard that it is proper for him to attend to the initiate during his seclusion. But neither of these rules is observed with strictness.

While the decoration of the initiates is going forward, guests are arriving in the village. On such occasions it is the custom, not for the hosts, but for the guests, to perform a dance. (On a future occasion the invitation will be returned, and the hosts in the present instance will then be the performers.) In the ceremony at Divina Kovari two such parties of dancers arrived, one before and one after the formal entry of the decorated initiates. It is not necessary

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881 574 535 to describe their dances, which are entirely conventional and have no bearing on the ceremony in hand. They are, as far as I know, merely a form of entertainment.

881 535 The initiates make an ostentatious entry. The dancing is in full swing when a loud roar of voices is heard, and the *ebamei* appear assembled at the entrance to the village. They advance swiftly, flanked and covered in the rear by a mass of supporters so that the whole body forms a dense phalanx. Met with various gestures of resistance from the people in the village they come to a sudden halt in the centre, bracing themselves for a moment, and then advance again in the same irresistible manner. At the end of the village they turn about and charge down its length once more, and having done so, the compact body breaks up and resolves itself into the old-fashioned dance called *Kuru*. The boy initiates join in this, while the girls in the usual way dance apart, either in front or rear.

All the *ebamei*, both male and female, carry mock spears of light white wood, each with a piece of red-dyed bark-cloth tied near the point. Many of them also carry stone clubs. Both boys and girls wear their *bo* which have been newly put on for the ceremony (though they have probably been in the habit of wearing garments of this kind long before). They almost stagger under their gigantic head-dresses, and their persons are festooned with frilled yellow grass, tassels of which hang over the face so as to form a partial disguise.

The *ebamei* soon withdraw from the *kuru* dance, and while this and the other dances proceed with undiminished vigour, stand in line watching them, evidently uncomfortable and apparently almost stupefied.

### *Presentation of 'Otobu'*

881 Late in the afternoon a number of the *ebamei* were presented with their *otobu*. Whereas every initiate receives his *kokumburi* feathers, not every one of them receives an *otobu*. However, as it is very usual to make this an occasion for presenting an *otobu*, I may pass on to describe the method of presentation as if it formed the next step in the series of

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(*a*) Formal appearance of the Initiates

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(*b*) Initiates wearing *Kabumbari* feathers

PLATE XXV

Facing p. 188

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It is finally wrapped up with some of the fat and entrails and buried. In other cases it is hung up in the garden of the deceased and there left to rot in the sun and rain. This garden has been allowed to fall to rack and ruin since his death: none of its products have been eaten, though the young taro shoots may be transplanted to a new plot. In the Wasida dialect the word *kisa* was applied to such a garden. It appears that in this case the neglect of the garden was less a self-denying tabu than due to an actual fear of evil consequences—such as sore eyes, tooth decay, skinniness—if its products were eaten. And it is noteworthy that such effects would be felt only by the immediate relatives of the dead. It was possible, in fact, to make an exchange of gardens, so that the bereaved relatives would not be left without resources, the *kisa* garden being passed over to one who would take no harm from it, and another being given in exchange to the relatives of the dead. The evil potency of the *kisa* garden is apparently attributed to the malignant spirits of the dead—an explanation for which I have the direct testimony of one informant, although in many other cases it remained inexplicit. It is in keeping with the belief (which is a basis for a system of divination, cf. p. 281) that the dead revisit or haunt their gardens, and in general with the fear which the Orokaiva feels for his deceased relatives *qua sovai*. Among the various mourning tabus which have come to my notice, however, this, viz. the forbidding of the garden to the relatives of the deceased, was the only instance in which the motive was apparently one of fear. All the others were rather manifestations of sorrow.

### *The Naterari, or Tabu Post*

The fourth major mortuary ceremony is a dance, which among the Aiga and Binandele is accompanied by a dramatic performance. The fifth is the ritual disposal of certain materials used in the fourth ceremony. Now I do not believe that the dance and drama are purely and wholly a mortuary ceremony, but that they are at least partly so appears from the facts that the dead are called upon to witness the proceedings, and that, when the proceedings are over, certain

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765 paraphernalia connected with the dead are ceremonially and
535 finally disposed of. On the other hand, the dance and drama
536 have their own intrinsic value as forms of art and amusement, and, furthermore, they commonly occur in connexion with the initiation and seclusion of a number of youths and girls.

765 The whole subject of dance and drama, however, will be
784 discussed in the next chapter. In the meantime I shall deal
718 with the tabu upon the food-supply which precedes the fourth stage, and which makes possible the large feast which is perhaps the most important feature of the proceedings in so far as they are of a mourning nature. The mark of this tabu is the *naterari* or tabu post, which has already been referred to in Chapter VIII, p. 117. As we saw there, it usually takes the form of a rough-hewn pillar or post, standing a few feet high in the open space of the village. Properly speaking it is made of the *beratu* wood of the clan; but when the *beratu* is not of a suitably solid nature the *naterari* may consist merely of a piece of light timber called *pamba* tied to the butt of a palm, or perhaps to a croton bush. *Na* means 'village', and *terari* 'to close up', as a creek is dammed up with stones, or as the hollow drum is closed at one end with the lizard skin. The Binandele word is *ao*, apparently a contraction of *ago* (another dialectal form): I cannot make any suggestion as to its real meaning. In Wasida the same object is called *itembari*, probably a compound of *i*, 'tree', and *tembari*, 'to place on top'. In Doboduru the word was *natembabije*: *na*, 'village', *temba*, 'to place on top', *abije*, 'ancestor'.

Some months after the man's death the *naterari* is set up in the centre of the village, and from this moment the coconuts are not eaten green but allowed to ripen and fall, until at last there is a tremendous accumulation, perhaps laid out in lines on the ground or else piled on a mountainous tripod. Meanwhile the *naterari* has been standing in the village clearing as if silently watching the slow preparations, somewhat weatherbeaten by now, and with its originally garish make-up a little faded. It is, however, treated with a certain amount of care and respect. It is not uncommon to see a

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# XIV

## DANCE AND DRAMA

BEFORE describing the dance and drama in detail it may be as well to set down a brief programme of events, i.e. the sequent stages of the festival. We may assume that the tabu is on the village and that it will remain until the occasion of the feast. If this feast is to be a considerable one, the first step will be the construction of an *arijo*, i.e. a men's house, which will be frequented by the men alone, and used for singing. This may be built a month or so before the festival, and from time to time the old-fashioned dancing (*kuru*) will take place in the open space before the *arijo*.

As the time for the festival approaches, the dancers practise the dance specially arranged for the occasion. There may be an enclosure, *java bamboru*, in or on the outskirts of the village, where they may rehearse in private. (Note that this *java bamboru* may be in the village where the feast and dance are to take place, or in another village. The latter is frequently the case because the dance is commonly performed by *vititors* who have previously undertaken to present it. They therefore rehearse in their own village, and stage the finished performance in the village where the festival is taking place.)

The preparations for the feast are now finalized, food being brought in from the gardens, and platforms or booths erected to stack the provisions or provide shelter for the guests. When everything is in readiness there is a formal semi-public rehearsal of the dance called *pamoni kiari*, or 'Demonstration before the Women'. This takes place on the afternoon before the festival, and is not witnessed by any save the villagers who are making the dance.

The remaining stages may be summarized as follows:

(i) During the night the stage fixtures are set up in the village, and any movable stage paraphernalia placed ready in the bush.

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(ii) The morning of the festival sees all the guests assembled. The performers are decorating themselves in the bush.

(iii) The ballet makes its appearance at some moment during the afternoon.

(iv) After dancing some ten minutes or more the ballet goes off and brings back the movable stage properties.

(v) While they resume the dance the actors, *huivi* and *binei*, make their entry and proceed with the play. This being concluded, they dance off and disappear in the bush.

(vi) The ballet proceeds for a while with the main dance, and then breaks off into a series of minor 'nature' dances.

The performance of the dance and drama may be said to end here. The paraphernalia of the play, however, are brought together, and finally disposed of in a ceremonial manner, but this may be a matter of months afterwards. I shall now proceed to deal with the Orokaiva dance in detail, giving an account—confessedly slight—of its technique.

### *The Dance*

The general name for 'dance' is *java* (Binandele *ya*). As far as I have ascertained there are five main kinds practised by the Orokaiva, viz. (1) *Kuru*, (2) *Paruka*, (3) *Arijo* or *Saunda*, (4) *Puga*, and (5) *Si*. Only the first two are accompanied by song, and only the last three are accompanied by the drama.[1] The first, *kuru*, is without any definite formation save that of a group of men and boys clustered about several drummers. They dance slowly in one direction and then back over the same ground, singing meanwhile. Their movements are quite unpretentious, and might be described as rhythmical shuffling. In all the other dances the performers are in pairs one behind the other, forming double file. Each kind has its appropriate drums and rhythm, the drums being carried by the dancers themselves.

[1] The drama is not an invariable accompaniment of *Arije*, for I have seen a performance of this dance without it. I cannot speak with certainty of *Puga* or *Si*, though I am given to understand that they are always associated with a dramatic performance.

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(1) *Kuru*; also called *Gatari, Puruto, Jivari.*

*Form*: Dancers clustered about drummers.

*Drum*: *Ino* (large) and *Ebu* (medium); accompanied by singing.

*Rhythm*: Regular continuous beat. (Spondaic.)

*No Drama.*

(2) *Paruka, Baruga* (the name of the southern neighbours of the Orokaiva).

*Form*: Dancers in double file; the movements are lighter and more rapid than in 3, 4, or 5.

*Drum*: *Ebu*; accompanied by singing.

*Rhythm*: Time of three, with the stress on the second beat, the third being missed or made with an almost inaudible tap of the finger-tips. (Iambic.)

Natives call this rhythm '*Guru Gúru—Guru Gúru—*.' In pronouncing, the two syllables of *Guru* must be run as nearly as possible into one.

*No Drama.*

(3) *Saunda* or *Arijo* (*Saunda*—the small drum; *Arijo*—men's dancing or singing house).

*Form*: Dancers in double file.

*Drum*: *Saunda* (small); no singing.

*Rhythm*: Time of four, stress on third beat, fourth beat usually missed. (Anapaestic.)

*Drama.*

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(4) *Puga* (*Puga*, or, in the Binandele form, *Bua*—the empty shell of the *Puga* fruit, used as a rattle. *Torepa*, which means the same, is another name for this dance).

*Form*: Dancers in double life.

*Drum*: *Saunda*; no singing.

*Rhythm*: Same as *Saunda*, but quicker, and the fourth beat heard more often. (Anapaestic.)

*Drama.*

(5) *Si, Shi, Ji,* &c. (the word means 'weeping').

*Form*: Dancers in double file.

*Drum*: *Ehu*; no singing.

*Rhythm*: Time of two, stress on first beat; occasionally varied by three short beats instead of two. (Trochaic and occasionally dactylic.)

Natives call this rhythm '*Kingi Kingi Kigigi*', &c.

*Drama.*

I can give very little information as to the origin of these several kinds of dance. It is generally admitted that *kuru* is the most primitive of them. It is of universal distribution, and seems to have attained to no kind of specialization. It is merely the old style of singing together and moving in unison, and is ready for any occasion. *Baruga* is a popular dance, and appears to be universally distributed. It is said to have come, as its name implies, from the south, but whether it is earlier or later than *Saunda*, *Puga*, or *Si* I am unable to say definitely.

*Arijo* (or *Saunda*) is now widely distributed, though informants have declared that it comes from the northern Orokaiva. As to *Puga* and *Si*, it seems likely that they at

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535 least were confined to the Aiga and Binandele until comparatively recent times. It is said that *Pago* originated among the Jeva Buje of the lower Kumusi, and that *Si* originated among the Aiga. One need not attach much value to these accounts, but I repeat for what it is worth a tale of the discovery of *Si*. An old man, Ororo, was seated on a platform in the village of Petakiari, lost in contemplation of the river which swirled by in a flood. Something catches the old man's attention and he cranes his neck. Is it a crocodile? No, a *sasa*, that is to say, a branch or tree trunk all but submerged in the river. The water pours over the *sasa* and presses it under for a moment until its resilience brings it to the surface again, and this process goes on so that the branch sways rhythmically up and down. Ororo, reaching for his drum, lightly taps out the measure that the *sasa* shows him, and thinks out the movements for a new dance. Meanwhile his wife, watching the old man tapping his drum, is for some reason so moved by the spectacle as to burst into lamentation. Thus the swaying of the *sasa* gave Ororo the inspiration for a new dance, and the weeping (*si*) of his wife supplied it with a name.

It will be seen that, with the exception of *Kuru*, all the dances have double-file formation. When they begin the dance the performers are two by two facing in the same direction; and throughout all the movements this formation is retained, or at least regained from time to time. It is very usual for the couples to be composed of boyhood friends or *otavo* (see p. 166), who have been accustomed to dance together, just as they shared many other tasks or exploits. These couples have various parts to perform according to their positions in the column; and these positions have definite names, from 'head' to 'tail', as if the column of dancers represented an animal or reptile, though there is no such picturesque fancy in the native mind. The most active part is taken by the leading couple, who are called *hoburu*, the 'head'; and a characteristic detail of the dance is seen when they, or the third couple, *sasuri*, beat their drums over the faces of the second couple, *tunga*, who bend their bodies backwards as they dance.

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(*a*) Dancers in the *Si* Dance

(*b*) Scene in a village during a Dance

(*c*) Performers of Dance *Arijo*

PLATE XXXI [Facing p.234]

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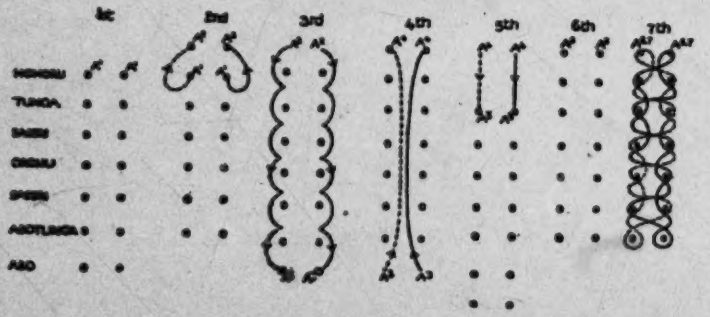
535 The couples from front to rear are named as follows:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| o o | *Hoboru* . | . | Head. |
| o o | *Tunga* . | . | Neck. |
| o o | *Saseri* . | . | The branch set up as a shelter from the sun. |
| o o | *Orobu* . | . | The first finger. |
| o o | " | | |
| o o | *Saseri.* | | |
| o o | *Abo-tunga* | . | Tail-neck. |
| o o | *Abo* . | . | Tail. |

It will be understood that the column varies in length according to the number of dancers available. I imagine that any extra couples take their places in the middle, and are called *orobu*. As to the meanings of the words, that of *saseri* seems unsatisfactory, and no plausible explanation




was offered. *Orobu* means 'the first finger', though it may be that this is not the only meaning of the word. *Abo* incidentally is used for the little finger, but the word stands for the rear, the tail, the anus, the last in general. It may be repeated that the various parts of the dancing column, despite their suggestive names, do not seem to be welded into any complete image in the native mind.

It has been impossible to record the figures of the dances in any detail. The above examples, however, which were noted at a performance of *Si*, may be regarded as typical. The leading pair, *boboru*, are marked A, A, and the numbers show the positions they occupy at the beginning and end of each figure.

The column moves forwards and backwards more than

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535 it is possible to indicate in the diagram, and it must be understood that every dancer is continually in action. In the fourth figure, for instance, while $A^3$, $A^3$ are dancing down the centre to their new position $A^4$ $A^4$, the rest of the dancers move in the opposite direction. In the fifth figure all the performers dance backwards for some distance, beating their drums heavily, and then in the sixth they advance on tiptoe over the same ground, stooping and tapping their drums almost inaudibly, all of which forms a very quiet and pretty contrast to the previous movement. The seventh figure, called *Tebokari* or 'crossing', is a favourite, and very effective. It will be remembered that the above are merely typical examples and do not pretend to be a complete list of dance figures.

While dealing with the subject of dances in general we must notice the minor class of what might be called mimetic or nature dances. These, as reference to the programme on p. 231 will show, are usually performed after the drama. They are not to be regarded as essential parts of the major dances, but are in the nature of extras, cheerful little items which are added at the end of the entertainment. They are very numerous, and it appears that they are severally associated with one or other of the major dances, i.e. some are performed after *Si*, others after *Paruka*, &c. They are brief and animated. The dancers perform them with obvious zest, and pass rapidly from one to another as if they had any number at the tips of their toes. A brief description of a selection will show their general character.

1. *Gosevo Ijukari—'Threading the Fish on a Line'*. The fisher-woman, whenever she catches a small *gosevo* fish, threads it (*ijukari*) through the gills with a withe, until presently she has a whole succession of *gosevo* trailing behind her. The dancers form single file and move rapidly in a circle.

2. *The Purere Bird*. The *purere* is a small bird which seeks its food on the ground. The men dance on their heels and each revolves in a half-circle, regaining the usual two and two formation. The *purere* is hopping about in search of its food.

3. *Umo Ganigari—'The Rushing through of the Waters'*. When

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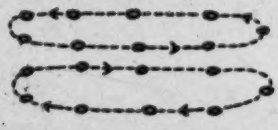
fishing in the creek the native will dam up the stream and bale out the water below his dam. Sometimes the dam breaks, and a continuous stream of water rushes through. The two ranks of the dance column begin by moving in one direction, then turn outwards, back, and in again, so as to form a continuous swift movement:



4. *Huruga—'The Frog'*. The two ranks of dancers face inwards. They advance towards one another by short hops; the ranks pass through one another and about turn. The drums beat a slow deliberate rhythm which is reminiscent of the 'knocking' croak of the frog.

5. *Hobora—'The Cock'*. The dance divides into two bodies each in the usual double-file formation. A spear being set up between the two parties they dance towards it from either side, raising their drums as they do so; then they retreat, stooping, and with drums lowered. Meanwhile one man in the centre dances round the spear keeping his eye fixed on it. The whole dance is a pretty one, though it is not easy to explain its symbolism. The advance and retreat of the two parties, however, is oddly suggestive of the cock flapping his wings as he crows.

6. *Tongiju—'The Spirit of the Slain'*. The dancers form two bodies, each in a single file and each facing toward a spear set up between them. They all take several steps to the right, then several steps to the left, first shaking or jerking their heads to the right, then doing the same to the left. The *tongiju* is the spirit of a man who has been clubbed on the head and is trying to jerk the blood out of his ears.

7. *Ba Utera—'Pulling the Taro'*. The dancers sink almost on to their heels, striking the drums. Then they leap upright, raising the right hand as if pulling a taro from the ground.

8. *Pengoro—'The Tadpole'*. The dancers are in the usual two-and-two formation. Almost squatting on their haunches

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535 they run forward a few paces and halt, and as they halt the two leaders rise, turn, and beat their drums over the heads of the pair behind them. The action, which is repeated again and again, is suggestive enough of the large-headed tadpole making short darts through the water.

535 292 The costume of the dancer requires some description. The first of the major dances, *kuru*, does not call for any special decoration, but in all the others the performers appear in what may be called full costume, viz. feather head-dress, face-paint, ornaments held in the teeth, and *ando*, i.e. voluminous skirts or mantles of grass or palm leaf, frayed and dyed. It is unnecessary to dwell on the effectiveness of the *ensemble*. Bunches of croton add to the already brilliant colouring, and the dancer, with his massive head-dress and sweeping draperies, seems to be magnified far beyond human size.

It is worthy of note, however, that the costume constitutes a virtual disguise, which is in some cases made more complete by a veil of shredded palm leaf which hangs from the forehead. This disguise derives extra significance from the fact that there is at least an affectation of secrecy as to the identity of the dancers. At the formal rehearsal before the women, called *Pawoni kiari*, the parts are deliberately 'faked': the various positions are not taken by the men who are to take them in the final appearance on the following day. Again, prior to a dance which I witnessed, the names and positions of the personnel were told over to me, but in a whisper, and only within the confines of the *java hamboru*. The native reason for this secrecy was that the effect upon the women and the guests would be spoilt by divulging the names of the performers.

There is one particular in the costumes to which I would draw attention. In some of the dances—I have not carefully noted which—certain of the performers wear a conical head-dress of croton leaves. It is usually the leading pair (*boboru*), and perhaps also the last pair (*abo*), who appear in this uncommon headgear. Now at Bovera on the river Eia, which is practically the northern boundary of the Orokaiva, I have seen in a man's house several conical head-dresses strongly

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made of cane and bark-cloth, which were virtually masks; 535
and Mr. C. H. Karius informs me that he has seen on the 292
river Waria what we should definitely call masked dancers, whose mask was once more of the same conical shape.

These particulars—the secrecy, the virtual disguise, also 535
perhaps the use of palm-leaf skirts and mantles, and cer- 292
tainly the conical head-gear—all remind one of the masked 171
dances of the Western Papuan, and in particular of the typical conical mask of the *'kaiva kuku'*. I would, therefore, put forward the very tentative suggestion that in the ceremonial dances of the Orokaiva we have a faint replica of the masked dance of the west. If this were so we should have a fair case for viewing the dance as a mortuary ceremony in which the dancers originally represented the spirits of the dead. For the present, however, this may be laid aside as no more than a conjecture.

### *The Drama: Stage Accessories*

We may now turn our attention to the drama which 536
always appears as a well-defined episode, and thus admits of separate treatment. I have used the word 'drama', despite its pretentious sound, because it is really the most non-committal; though 'mime' or 'farce' might have been more descriptive. As dialogue is almost completely absent, the expression 'dumb-show' would have been perhaps the most accurate of all. It is very difficult to discover a native word for the drama as abstracted from the remainder of the performance, i.e. the dance. The most satisfactory is *sesena* (Binandele *tetenya*) which means simply 'play', or 'play about'. Sometimes it is called *sovai-sesena*, 'the game played by the *sovai*'. Another word, of which I do not know the literal meaning, is *tebua*; and yet another—*yavetu*. It will be remembered that the play is proceeded or ushered in by the ballet. When the dance has been in progress for some ten minutes or more, the dancers suddenly leave in a body, retire into the bush near by, and reappear bearing the movable stage properties. These naturally vary according to the subject of the drama: they may, e.g., consist of a garden platform on which one of the actors is to sit, or a sago-log

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536 sword-fish (*dira*). This, which was made of wood, measured eleven feet. The body of the structure consisted of a hollow tree-trunk split down the middle, but various boards had been affixed for fins, and at front and rear there were features to represent the monster's 'sword' and his long tail. The model had been used on a previous performance,[1] and had evidently been well finished and decorated, though it was now somewhat out of repair. (During the performance it sustained further damage, but was kept nevertheless, possibly to be used on a future occasion.) Underneath, or rather within, this wooden model, which may be referred to as *dira*, the sword-fish, there lay a man whose business it would presently be to supply the fish with motive power and intelligence. I do not know low long he had lain in this hot and cramped position, but he was evidently bearing the discomfort quite cheerfully. It is worth noting that informants showed some reluctance in allowing me to see the *dira* and what it contained before the proper moment for its appearance.

The dancers and actors had meanwhile been attiring themselves in some place apart. In the present case I believe it was the police barracks, though in the usual village performance the 'green room' is merely a convenient spot in the surrounding bush. When their preparations, which occupy several hours, are complete, it is time for the performance to begin.

536 535 It is part of Orokaiva stage art, and quite in keeping with the affectation of secrecy which surrounds the dance, that the ballet should make its appearance upon the 'stage' from some unexpected quarter. Thus they do not enter a village by the usual pathway, but after a toilsome detour they make a spectacular incursion from the bush or the concealment of the long grass. They announce their arrival by a thunderous tattoo (*kaka*) on the drums, and one turns to see the column of befeathered dancers stooping or crouching at the edge of the clearing. The drums suddenly break into the

[1] It may be noted that the most valuable stage properties, i.e. those which have been very carefully made, are sometimes spared in the formal destruction. I have seen two well-made puppets kept apparently as mementoes of dramatic performances, or perhaps to serve in a re-enactment.

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535

(*a*) The Ballet

536

(*b*) Bringing on the *Dera*

THE DRAMA *DERA*

PLATE XXXII [Facing p. 242]

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536 rhythm of the dance, and the leading couple (*boboru*, the
535 'head') spring upright and come dancing into the open. Only a dozen or so paces and they dance back again, to be accompanied next time by the second pair (*tunga*, the 'neck'). Now the two couples dance back once more, and on the third advance are followed by the whole body of dancers, who, performing the ordinary evolutions meanwhile, move across the open and take up their position (which, in this instance, is opposite the shelter of palm leaves at one end of the parade ground). Here they continue the dance for some ten minutes or longer. I can give no more detailed account of this dance (which was of the kind called *Puga*) than has been given already in the general description, pp. 233 ff.

It is usual for the ballet to leave the 'stage' at the conclusion of this initial dance in order to bring on the paraphernalia, but on this occasion they were still performing when six men appeared carrying the *dera*. The ballet now dances forward to meet them, breaks up and surrounds the party so that the *dera* (which is covered with blankets) can hardly be seen. As this drama is being specially performed for the magisterial 'Christmas', it is not surprising that several rather officious village constables, carrying their books, should accompany the bearers and issue a multitude of instructions. These, however, though well-intentioned are quite unnecessary. The *dera*, which still contains the man whom we may call its manipulator, is carried to the shelter and placed underneath it, the blankets are removed, and the bearers and dancers withdraw, the latter to renew their dance. They are now, as previously, formed up before the open side of the shelter, and at a distance of perhaps fifteen paces from it.

536 The performance goes on for a moment or two when the attention of the spectators suddenly turns to two 'girls' who come dancing and leaping very gracefully through the coconut palms toward the parade ground, one following the other. These are, of course, the two sisters, who are impersonated by male actors called *buvivi*. Each carries the women's quarterstaff completely bound with red material,

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### *Ceremonial Significance of Dance and Drama*

535 536 It remains now to attempt an appreciation of the dance and drama in respect of their functions and value, to connect them with what has been described in the previous chapters, and to place them correctly in the life of the community.

The combined dance and drama of the Orokaiva have, I believe, less real value as ceremonial than as art or play. However, we may for a moment ignore this latter and more important aspect, and consider what meaning—latent or otherwise—they may possess as ritual.

535 536 765 In the last chapter I implied that the dance and drama constituted a mortuary rite. Earlier it was suggested that they were in some degree or in some instances an initiatory rite, taking the place among the Aiga and Binandele of the *embabi* ceremony among the southern tribes. It seems probable that the set performance, combining dance and drama, sometimes fulfils both these functions together.

We have seen that the occasion of it brings to an end the tabu on the village coco-nuts, which was instituted expressly because of the death of a villager. The *naterari*, or tabu post, may be presented with offerings of food at the feast which accompanies the dance and drama, and it is made clear that these offerings are to the dead whom the *naterari* apparently represents. Before the dance and feast begin, the *sowai* or *bini* are hailed and bidden to attend, though information has not been entirely consistent on this point, some saying that the words are addressed to the particular individuals for whom the tabu was instituted and the feast is now being made, others that an invitation is offered to the spirits at large. In more than one straightforward instance, however, it appeared that the ceremony was definitely performed for one deceased individual; and in one of these instances it was affirmed that when the dancers began, the *sowai* of the deceased would 'get up and dance with them'. Again, while the ballet is going forward, the widows of the village wail and slash their cheeks, being reminded, it is said, of the time when their husbands danced and made merry. Lastly, when the performance is over, the para-

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535 536 765 phernalia of the play are stacked together, and so await a last ritual disposal, when the *sowai* of the deceased is bidden farewell. These facts, then, should be enough to show that the dance and drama can be regarded as a mortuary rite.

The actual significance of the rite remains a matter for conjecture. The native informant will say that it is celebrated in honour of the dead, who is called upon to be present and witness it, and to partake of the feast. It is plainly in the nature of a placation, and when it is all over it is hoped that the spirit will take his departure for good.

One is inclined to think, however, that it is the feast rather than the accompanying dance and drama that is the real act of placation. If this be so, what is then the function or significance of the dance and drama? One or two points of evidence have hinted at a possible explanation. An informant once told me that the spirit of the dead man for whom the feast and dance were being held would be present and dance with the dancers. There is again the queer practice of the widows, who, when the dancers appear, may break forth into lamentation and slash their cheeks and foreheads with quartz. They are said to be reminded of their husbands. It is as if in the semi-disguised figures of the dancers they saw their own men-folk returned from the place of the spirits.

The rite called *sirari*, i.e. the ritual disposal of the costumes, &c., of the actors and sometimes of the dancers, is not out of keeping with this idea. What remains of the *sawuna* or of the dancer, i.e. his costume and paraphernalia, is put aboard the raft and abandoned, and it is said at the same time that the *sowai* of the deceased travels aboard the raft. It is difficult not to associate the two, almost difficult not to identify them. It might well enough be that the *sawuna*, grotesque and foolish as he is, was in some manner impersonating the deceased, and that now the disguise in which he did it is being mentally identified with him.

There is something, moreover, in the secrecy as to the identity of the dancers and in the more or less complete disguise they wear—matters which have been already referred to (*vide* p. 238). These, together with a point of similarity

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535 536 765 in costume, have suggested a possible affinity with the masked dance of the Western and Gulf Papuans, and the suggestion here put forward—be it remembered, in an entirely tentative manner—is that the performers in the Orokaiva dance and drama originally impersonate the spirits of the dead, who foregather to partake of the mortuary feast.

The feast is the real act of placation. It is provided for the spirits, and in order to make the donors of the feast feel more satisfied that it is accepted by them, the spirits are brought on to the scene in the persons of the disguised dancers and actors. It may be repeated that no native ever placed this interpretation on the dance and drama, and that, in the absence of more telling evidence than I have been able to supply, it is intended for nothing more than a conjecture.

535 536 881 We have next to consider the dance and drama as constituting a rite of initiation. I regret that during the whole of my stay among the Aiga and Binandele there was no opportunity of witnessing an initiation, so I can bring forward only verbal evidence that the *ebamei*, or 'new children', i.e. the initiates, make their appearance together with the dancers, and witness the performance of a play. I have also been told that in some cases the initiate bears a minor part in the play, viz. that of a *buvivi*. At any rate, however, it may be regarded as certain that the dance and drama form part of the cycle of puberty ceremonies among the Aiga and Binandele.

The question is whether they constitute the essence of the ceremony, i.e. whether they correspond to the meeting with the *embabi*, which is the essence of initiation among the southern Orokaiva. Here again it may be remembered that no native has ever spoken of the two rites as corresponding, and the suggestion that the dance and drama have some initiatory significance is my own. It is based upon the following facts: (1) The dance and drama always form part of the puberty cycle. (2) In the dance the performers are virtually disguised by their costumes, and their identity is meant to remain secret, just as it is with the *embabi*, who are supposedly irrecognizable to the initiates. (Further, as I have just indicated, one is tempted to conjecture that the

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disguised dancers among the Aiga and Binandele originally represented spirits of the dead.) (3) In the drama we find the same kind of secrecy. The identity of the actors is not revealed, and the plot of the play is not divulged before its performance, nor does any one care to pry into these matters. Furthermore, in the drama there always appears at least one *bisi* or *sovai*, i.e. spirit of the dead.

The gist of initiation among the southern Orokaiva is to bring the candidate into contact with the supposed spirits of the dead, and make him acquainted with the bull-roarer and the flutes which are the voices of the spirits; whereas among the Aiga and Binandele, who know neither the bull-roarer nor the flute, the candidate is, nevertheless, brought into contact with the spirits of the dead in the drama and conceivably also in the dance which accompanies the drama.

This interpretation of the ceremony, viz. as a rite of initiation, may be thought unnecessary in view of the other, which gives it a mortuary significance. It will be noted, however, that the two are not incompatible if there be any truth in the theory that the dance and drama bring forth impersonators of the spirits. It may be noted that, since the confinement of a batch of youths and girls is a comparatively rare occurrence, the dance and drama appear usually in their mortuary guise alone.

In fine the combined dance and drama seem to me primarily of a mortuary nature, but this may make them all the more suitable for initiation, an essential idea of which is, apparently, to bring the initiate into contact with the supposed spirits of the dead. For the present, then, I shall set down only this much as a conclusion, viz. that the dance and drama (whatever their real significance) constitute a mortuary rite, and possibly also an initiatory one, and as for their significance it is suggested that the performers in the dance, and at least the main actors in the drama represent spirits of the dead.

### *Aesthetic and Recreative Value*

So far I have spoken of the ceremonial functions of the dance and drama. I now wish to draw attention to their more real, 'live', functions, viz. the aesthetic and recreative.

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535 The dance or ballet is one of swift, swinging, vigorous action. There is no place in it for cramped or stilted movement, and, although all figures are strictly regulated, they never lose a certain dash or impetuosity. At the same time the dancers must be intent on their work, for the figures are not without difficulty, and are only perfected after many rehearsals. But when their dance is in full swing it is obvious that the dancers take great pleasure in the successful performance of a difficult work of art. And this pleasure is, of course, intensified in each by the fact that all are acting in concert. The dance is a fine piece of 'team-work', conducted to a stirring rhythm which the dancers themselves create, for each holds and beats his own drum.

It goes without saying that every performer, brilliantly befeathered and draped with flowing garments of dyed grass, feels a delightful titivation of his self-regarding impulses. The folk-tales dwell upon the personal successes of dancers, and it is well known that young female spectators are sometimes ravished into matrimony.

Altogether it may be claimed that the Orokaiva ballet is a beautiful and valuable creation. No spectator could withhold his admiration for the brilliancy of its colour, for the charm of its figures, and for the grace and vim of its performers, while to the performers themselves it clearly means aesthetic satisfaction, *camaraderie*, and heightened self-esteem. If such a comment may be ventured in this report, I do not know of any more charming and admirable feature of native life than the Orokaiva dance, nor of any that is better worth preserving.

536 The drama, or dramatic interlude in the ballet, is of special interest. It may be that the faculty for dramatic representation is strongly developed in most primitive peoples, but comparatively few at the low cultural level of the Orokaiva have evolved a set form. Whatever may have been its original ritual significance (and I have suggested that it is a mortuary, and perhaps also an initiatory rite), it has practically reached the stage when it is an end in itself. Although seldom, if ever, performed without some ceremonial pretext, it nevertheless possesses an interest which is

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X 794 796 The rites—they hardly deserve such a name—are of an exceedingly sociable character, consisting typically of a singing in concert, to the accompaniment of drums, and of feasting with certain new forms of etiquette, the whole festive ceremony being known as *Kasamba*. The songs—[533] like so many native songs, unintelligible alike to the listener and the singers—would often appear to be, in their origin, exhortations or hymns of praise to the taro. Certain sects perform distinctive dances, but, except in [535] a few instances, the dance has not been highly elaborated, and remains a minor feature of the cult. Perhaps as an X 794 786 unintentional substitute, the innumerable followers of the movement indulged in various kinds of foolish antics, with reeling, staggering, and a violent shaking of the head and limbs known as *jipari*. There was no attempt to control these actions—rather the contrary—and they commonly ended in mild contortions and paroxysms. Such uncontrolled bodily movements do not belong to the Taro cult alone, but have been a common and unpleasant feature of many of the new religious movements enumerated above.

X 794 792 While practically every one has been a willing convert to the Taro cult in so far as it meant participation in the song and feast, and while perhaps the majority have given way at some time or other to the pleasant abandonment of the *jipari*, there is a wide class of Taro *experts* or special exponents of the cult. It is impossible to set a definite limit to this class. There are some who are recognized as leaders and who are very strongly 'possessed', and others who are little more than laymen. However, it is possible to include them all under the name of *ba-embo*, which means literally 'Taro man'. Such men, who, like the *Baigona* men, might be called priests of the cult, officiate and lead in the ceremonial feasting; they perform certain duties in the taro gardens; they make a special practice of *jipari* and similar contortions; and they subject themselves to certain taboos. The theory of their conduct is that of possession by a spirit, either of the taro itself or of the dead.

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anxious to give what account they could of a subject in which they evidently take a great interest. Indeed, with regard to the Taro cult, informants have almost invariably tried their best to explain matters which are probably as hazy to themselves as to their questioner; for the native keeps few things intentionally secret from the white man save those which he fears will excite disapproval. Buninia began to describe the dream in which, at Taututu, he was first made to realize his possession by the taro spirit. He decided to do so with dramatic effects. Immediately a number of youths flew off to the near-by garden to see to their make-up, while Buninia, his head pillowed for convenience in the lap of Yaviripa, lay on the ground as if asleep. Soon seven or eight young men, gaily bedecked with coloured leaves of *Bayoga*, *Sirori*, and other Taro 'medicines', form up before him. Some carry drums; others have bundles of taro, thrown over arm or shoulder. These youths are the *Ba atiti*, 'spirits of the taro', who appeared in human form to the dreaming Buninia; and they are identified individually with the various kinds of Taro—*Kaiva*, *Porove*, *Ovivi*, and so forth.

Now they beat their drums and begin to dance. Buninia slowly rises, looks in astonishment at the gay figures before him, and then, suddenly shouting '*Ba, ba, ba, ba!*' rushes into the dance. The movements closely resemble those of the conventional Orokaiva *ballet*. The young men, dancing two by two, move gracefully and with that appearance of power which is so admirable a feature of the northern dance; while Buninia, a doddering old man, his person gaily decorated with coloured and scented leaves, whirls swiftly through and around the couples, still shouting his '*Ba, ba, ba!*' When the dance is finished the taro spirits deposit their bundles in a heap and retire. The dream is ended and Buninia (somewhat blown by his exertions) awakes, calls his friends around him, and proceeds to distribute the taro which the spirits have left behind.

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A scene witnessed in the Aiga village of Korisata is typical enough, and will illustrate the way in which the Taro cult advances. A party of visitors had arrived from the lower Kumusi, which is not more than a good day's journey from Korisata. They were of another tribe—Binandele—and the purpose of their visit was principally that of reunion with their Taro friends and propaganda for the cause. They were led by an old man Tevara, a person of some distinction and a doyen of the cult in these parts, and by a village constable named Kove, an unusually volatile and excitable character and well known to the Government for his energy.

It has been pointed out that the Taro cult is divided into a number of sects. The nature of these will be fully treated later on: it is enough at present to say that Tevara was of the *Kaiva* and Kove of the *Kivere* sect, both these words being the names of varieties of the actual taro plant. In Korisata there was already established a branch of the *Kaiva* sect under one Siavije, which though bearing the same name differed in a good many points from the *Kaiva* of the visitors, owing no doubt to a long previous divergence. Lastly there were the new converts to *Diroga*, led by my interpreter Ihipa. Thus there were four parties of Taro men in the village at one time, all united by the good fellowship which is one of the best characteristics of the movement, but all anxious to show themselves off to advantage before the others.

In the first day's demonstration Kove the village policeman was almost alone and quite overshadowed, especially by the young and enthusiastic recruits of *Diroga*. He said he would show them, however, and that night went on to a village a mile or so distant where his own *Kivere* sect was strongly represented. On the morrow, he declared, there would be a 'race', i.e. a competition, to see who danced longer and better, and who were the more numerous.

At about noon next day Kove's party, heavily rein-

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forced, made its appearance to the sound of drums and conches and their own lusty voices, and took up their stand at one end of the village. The accredited *Kivere* men formed the front rank; behind them were the drummers and singers, mere laymen; and behind these again a number of girls made use of the opportunity for displaying their charms in a dance.

The *Kivere* men carry spears. Gripping them tightly they reel, shudder, and posture, the spear struck into the ground seeming to act as some support, while their faces assume expressions of great agony, which, one sincerely hopes, are largely counterfeit. For the most part they remain stationary, though occasionally an individual will break away, and brandishing his spear, and swerving in and out among spectators and coco-nut palms, perform a frantic, staggering circle back to his place in the rank.

While these demonstrations of the power of the spirit are continuing, the arrival of the *Diroga* men is awaited from the other end of the village. This rival party has been preparing its paint and feathers and characteristic decoration of flowers or leaves, and has been practising assiduously the steps of the *Diroga* dance. Now, headed by two old adepts (both interpreters of mine who hail from the district where *Diroga* is in vogue), the new converts advance in open formation toward the waiting *Kivere* men. Their movements are full of grace: they progress at once rapidly and slowly, bounding forward a few yards and then retreating almost as far again. There are definite steps to be performed but no complicated movements; each dancer moves individually, dodging, gliding, or leaping; there is no voice heard save an occasional half-stifled ejaculation, a sort of whimper which the *Diroga* men affect; but every movement is accompanied by a thrust or jab of the slender spear, and the hollow rattles which are attached to it maintain a queer accompaniment. Resembling most a force in attack, the *Diroga* party was much more mobile than the usually solid phalanx of the *Kivere* men; their

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conduct had much more of art in it, and fewer real excesses. Considering that they were mostly novices their performance certainly did them credit. Foremost among them, and evidently very conscious of his own address, was my newly converted cook-boy, who danced far better than he cooked.

While these two parties were in a manner dancing one another down, the *Kaiva* men, though less strongly represented, were not idle. Old Tevara, head of the faction from the Kumusi, carried a magnificent spear, very weighty, and beautifully polished and feathered. This he manipulated as if in a pole dance, and performed graceful little pirouettes with his feet, all of which, to one's surprise, cost him no loss of dignity, although he was an elderly man and a very large one. Circling in and out among the bystanders he would pause from time to time to hold his spear horizontally above their heads, in a manner reminiscent of benediction. Prominent among his followers was his wife, whose movements had more velocity if less elegance, and who continually flicked the spectators with a bunch of the crimson-leafed taro medicine, *Tumeni*.

The local faction of *Kaiva* men had their main representative in Siavije, who, trotting aimlessly hither and thither between the several parties of dancers, and repeating something over and over to himself, acted a part all his own which, it is to be feared, made no great impression on the bystanders.

After the dances, antics, or paroxysms of the several sects had continued for some time, there followed a general pause in which the Korisata people, forming themselves into single file, paraded past the visitors, each man shaking the hand of every visitor in turn as he passed. Then one of the leaders of the *Diroga* delivered a harangue before Kove's party of *Kivere* men. Prancing back and forth before them and menacing them with his spear, after the manner of an Orokaiva who wishes to make his voice heard, he explained the methods of *Diroga*, and bade them

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wooden fork or prong called *orai*; the really correct implement for peeling it before cooking is the black oyster-shell *yowa*. These very trivial points are accorded a good deal of importance, because, one and all, they have been impressed upon the Taro men by the spirits. One man, for instance, met his deceased *imbo*, or maternal uncle, in a dream, and was directed to make 'forks' from a certain kind of tree named *aima*. The forks, of which there was now a large supply in the village, were merely pointed pieces of wood, painted a dull red with clay; but they appeared to possess a sanctity out of all proportion to their appearance or utility. It would be impossible to tell how often forks, wooden dishes, platters, and so forth have been bestowed upon various dreamers by the spirits of the taro or the spirits of the dead.

It has been said already that dancing is not a marked feature of the Taro cult, although the Orokaiva have developed the dance to an admirable degree of perfection in their older ceremonies. Hitherto the devotees of the cult have been only too ready to find satisfaction in the absurd and sometimes hideous antics which are presently to be described. Some sects perform a stationary and others a sort of processional dance, both of which compare very unfavourably with the graceful and animated ballet which is the best product of Orokaiva art. There are, however, certain dances belonging to minor sects which seem to conform to the older style. Buninia himself originated such a dance, which has already been mentioned (p. 13). Yavevi, a disciple of the Manau cult, used to perform with his followers one of unusual complexity. The *Hohora*, or 'Rooster', men reproduced in a nature dance certain characteristic actions of the domestic cock, and theirs was one of the prettiest performances it has been my good fortune to see among Orokaiva dancers. But it is still true that the dance is, as yet, only a minor and ill-developed feature of the cult. The Taro men prefer as a rule to sit down as they sing. A *tinogu* or *kasamba* may be merely impromptu, when it is per-

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formed in one of the men's houses, *oro*, which is usually no more than a roofed platform. In the event of a large festival, a *ba oro*, or Taro house, will be constructed for the occasion, and after the feast this structure may remain as in some sort a temple of the Taro. It is frequented (not always exclusively) by the accredited Taro men and their professional visitors; it is the scene of recurring *kasamba*; and in some cases it is the place for food offerings to the spirits. A miniature platform will sometimes be found in the roof gable, with a dish of taro and dried fish, to which the spirits help themselves, betraying their presence, I am told, by faint 'sip sip' noises, like the chirping of the geckos which haunt all native houses. In the *ba oro* a Taro man will sometimes sit alone, belabouring his drum and shaking his rattled spear. This, for reasons which he probably cannot explain, will please the spirits and induce them to prosper the taro.

Besides the very congenial duties of singing and eating, the Taro man has certain more directly useful tasks. These consist especially in the use of his medicines. *Ba sivo*, or magical fertilizers for the taro plant, were known long before the present cult came into being. One can often see in them a kind of logic, that of homoeopathic magic. For instance, there is a certain plant named *Iori babiva* which bears a striking resemblance to the taro, but differs from it in being much larger and ranker. These qualities are just what the gardener requires in his vegetables, so he drops a fragment of *Iori babiva* leaf in the hole before he drops in the taro shoot. This is merely an example: there are medicines without number for taro, sugar-cane, yams, and all the other products of the garden. The Taro men, being in a manner specialists, savants, and horticultural as well as spiritual leaders, make great play with this means of advancing the crops. The pharmacopoeia is an extensive one, and each Taro man will name half a dozen well-known *ba sivo*—common property of all who follow the cult—and probably, if you engage to keep his secret, one or two private medicines

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brothers on a raid, telling her to wait for his home-coming, when he would marry her. In due time he came back to the girl's house, far ahead of the others, to tell her that the raiders had been victorious and to take her away to his home. As they set off he bade her go in front, but looking over her shoulder the girl saw him jerking his head and stamping his foot, and finally noticed a trickle of blood from his ear. At that she became alarmed, left her husband on the track, and ran back to the village where she found the raiders bringing in his corpse. Real *diroga* jerk their heads, so should not *Diroga* men do the same?

The dance of the *Diroga* men has already been described (p. 20). With its swift advance and retreat, its dodging and sallying, and its truculent, threatening air, the performance seems to reproduce the attack of the fierce Orokaiva warrior. No native has offered an explanation, but it seems that the warlike nature of the dance is supposedly due to the possession of the dancers by warrior spirits.

The spears have become an emblem of the *Diroga* cult. Many, if not all of them, are found to bear personal names—the names in fact of the actual *diroga* which possess their owners. They are in fact symbols of the dead warriors. It is said, indeed, that 'the spears are men'. This makes clear the practice of gripping or stroking the spear-point. The universal hand-shaking of Taro men has been referred to. With *Diroga* men it is customary to touch their spear-points as well as to shake them by the hand: this, I am told, is a salutation to the *diroga* which is symbolized by the spear. If a man neglect this observance he may fall sick, because he has offended the *diroga*.

It has been said that the profession of curing is more pronounced among the *Diroga* men than among the ordinary followers of the Taro cult. The methods are, however, the same as those previously described, with special emphasis on the use of the spear (p. 60). With

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X-794 158 and it is certain that his followers did not need a rainbow to send them into a fit. The *Eriri* men carry spears and have a more or less distinctive form of *jipari*: they grip the spear and stand, trembling and dithering, for a minute or more at a time. Other *Eriri* men, recognizing their confreres in this condition, will come and shake them by the hand. The aim of the *Eriri* men is primarily to make the taro grow, but one witness informed me that when he saw a rainbow in the sky he would know it was the right time to go pig-hunting.

X-794 787 ●535 The *Hobora*, or 'Rooster' men, are widely distributed in the central and southern parts of the Division. The founder of the cult is said to be Garepa of Puhemu. According to Garepa himself, his brother had died and he was mourning, having in his grief actually imposed upon himself a taboo on taro and bananas. In this condition the dead man came to him and caused a fit of *jipari*. Subsequently in a dream he met his brother on the beach near Buna, and was informed that henceforth he was to be a *Hobora* man. *Hobora* is the name both of the domestic fowl and of a certain variety of yam. Garepa was to plant his garden with taro and yams, and also to perform a distinctive dance in imitation of the rooster. The dance (of which he gave a demonstration) was a good example of the Orokaiva native dance, with its usual grace and character. Other informants assured me that Garepa in his dream had actually witnessed a number of domestic cocks performing their dance, but the prophet's own account of his experience was less picturesque. The aim of the *Hobora* men is once more to prosper the gardens, though it does not appear that any special prominence was given to the yam *Hobora*. As a proof of his efficiency Garepa brought four immense taros to exhibit at our interview; these, he said, would show what he could do with his *jipari*. Other exponents of [156] *Hobora*, however, declared that they were not Taro specialists, but curers of the sick.

X-794 The Manau cult has been described by others (vide

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patriarchate which has been the Orokaiva fashion. While, however, we may welcome these signs of an incipient chieftainship in the power and influence of the Taro men, we cannot deny that they are to some extent—how far I have been unable to decide—founded upon the obnoxious practice of sorcery. Incidentally the theory of possession and the double role of priest and magician which the Taro man is called upon to play may give some colour to the theory that the functions of magician, priest, and chieftain were originally combined.

We have already noted the mutual amity which prevails among all branches of the cult, and have discovered cause to suspect that it is based on the fear of sorcery (p. 47). This general amity or fraternity, however, whatever its basis may be, is not only a striking, but on the whole a commendable feature of the cult. Clashes of arms—part in fun, part in earnest—are still common enough among the clans of the north; the warlike display at the welcome of visitors which sometimes leads to these affrays is in fact a regular custom. But although the Taro parties are constantly engaged in travel and visiting, I know of no serious quarrel between rival parties *qua* Taro parties. It is not necessary to observe that, but for the previous pacification of the Division, the Taro cult could never have spread itself so widely in so short a time. But it is still true that the cult is consolidating the work to which it was in the first place indebted. In fine, by arousing this elementary tendency toward cohesion, by establishing the intertribal power of a few individuals, and by advancing the spirit of intertribal friendliness, the Taro cult has played its part in emphasizing the unity of the Orokaiva. No movement of native origin has, since European occupation, made the same universal appeal to all the clans and tribes of this people.

We may briefly consider the effect of the Taro cult on Orokaiva art. This art, comparatively ill-developed on the decorative side, has attained to a high degree of perfection in the conduct of certain ceremonies. The

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Orokaiva dance, with its characteristic mime or drama, may justly be called an admirable work of art. The northern native is naturally musical, fond of colour and display, and built for graceful and powerful movement. These gifts he has developed into a somewhat rugged but nevertheless charming and even impressive art.

It cannot, I fear, be claimed that the Taro cult has done anything to improve or augment this existent art. The chorus singing—always no doubt very crude—has evidently received an impetus, and appears to have taken on a new form, with the special feature of a distinctive rhythm (p. 38). A few more or less meritorious dances have been devised by different sects or variant cults. But in the main the activities of the Taro men have far more of enthusiasm than of artistic form about them. Yet, since savages are very prone to express their emotions in rhythmic as well as lyrical form, it is to be hoped that the ill-controlled movements of the *jipari* may in time be replaced by others that are more formal and artistic. It would not be surprising if, when the *jipari* has completely died out of fashion, there should survive some regular dances which, while distinctive of the Taro cult, will conform more nearly to the older and eminently superior models.

In the meantime it is to be feared that the new cult has seriously set back these older ceremonial dances. The alleged decline of these in the Northern Division has been discussed in an interim report. Among several other causes it seems that the Taro cult is mainly responsible for this decline of the ceremonies, simply because it has for the time being overwhelmed them. I may be permitted to repeat an extract from the above-mentioned report. It is to be hoped that the effect spoken of will not be permanent.

> 'As far as my knowledge goes there is no antagonism among the Taro men toward the old-fashioned ceremonies. Certain of the Taro leaders about the Mambare have expressly denied that the old and the new are in any way incompatible; and in other parts one

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may see commonly enough a mingling of them on one and the same occasion. Indeed it is too often that a ceremony which, through generations of practice has assumed a refined and artistic form, should be interrupted and distorted by the excesses of a few vulgar Taro men. Regrettable as this must be, it serves to indicate that the Taro cult does not condemn the old ceremonies. For had it taken this turn it could have made as clean a sweep of them as the Vailala Madness did in the Gulf Division.

'In spite, however, of this neutral attitude, the Taro cult is probably responsible to no small extent for the decline of the old ceremonial dances. In these times the villagers find much of the social excitement they require in the feasting, singing, and inferior dancing which are features of the Taro cult, and also (though less now than formerly) in the various physical convulsions and paroxysms with which its devotees are affected. Moreover, as constant feasting and entertaining are the cardinal points of Taro ethics, the surplus of food which might provide for a celebration in the old-time way is squandered, so to speak, on these minor entertainments.

'The constantly recurring "*Kasamba*"—the combined singing and feasting which is typical of the Taro cult—very easily supplants the older and more elaborate ceremonies for several reasons. First, it is a craze: every village is anxious to be in the fashion. Secondly, it is a craze easily indulged: a *Kasamba* requires no rehearsal and no preparation, but can be got up at almost a moment's notice. Thirdly, it is in a sense obligatory: in some places the spirit of the taro, in others the spirit of the dead (according to the doctrine which happens to obtain) demands these feasts, and the effect of them is made visible in the output of taro. The more *Kasamba* the more taro.

'It may well be that this modern movement, which of late years has so occupied the thoughts of the Orokaiva, is now slackening, and that the activities of the Taro men, already greatly modified, no longer entirely crowd out the older ceremonies; and there seems every likelihood that further modifications will permit a revival of these older practices, which from most points of view (certainly the artistic) are eminently superior.'

Having reviewed some of the effects—vague as they are—of this remarkable movement we may formulate in very general terms our own proper attitude toward it. That native life should be permitted to shape itself out rather than be completely remodelled according to European taste, is a doctrine more often preached than practised. We may, however, cling to the theoretical

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